



Virginia Railway Express

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August 2, 2005

Mr. Malcolm T. Kerley, P.E.
Chief Engineer
Virginia Department of Transportation
1401 East Broad Street
Richmond, VA 23219

Dear Mr. Kerley:

I have received a copy of the I-95/395 High Occupancy Toll (HOT) Lanes Proposals and would like to offer my comments on both proposals. **This letter will review the Fluor/Transurban proposal.**

VRE supports the development of a robust transportation system with many options. With continuing growth in the region, even high-occupancy vehicles will eventually crowd the I-95/395 corridor. Rail transit, bus transit, vanpools, and slugging are all an integral part of managing commuter traffic and could all potentially benefit from a HOT lane system.

The Fluor/Transurban plan seeks to improve the region's transportation system by creating an infrastructure for a Bus Rapid Transit (BRT) system in addition to the HOT lanes. Their proposal calls for an information center and new Park and Ride lots to facilitate the development of a BRT system. Their proposal does not, however, provide a plan for using the system, and thus falls short of a truly coordinated, multi-modal system.

The Fluor/Transurban proposal does include a financial plan that allows for a potential transit subsidy, but it does not specify a guaranteed portion for individual transit agencies. The initial investment for transit will be used for new Park and Ride lots and bus stations as part of the BRT concept, so it cannot be used to improve the service of existing transit agencies. They do identify some excess revenues that could be used for transit, but there is no guarantee that these funds will be used in that manner. I believe the better alternative for Fluor

- A Transportation Partnership -

Northern Virginia
Transportation Commission
4350 North Fairfax Drive, Suite 720
Arlington, Virginia 22203
(703) 524-3322

Potomac and Rappahannock
Transportation Commission
14700 Potomac Mills Road
Woodbridge, Virginia 22192
(703) 583-7782

would have been to proactively seek out stakeholder input, and then provide funding for the critical needs of transit agencies in the corridor.

We were disappointed that the Fluor/Transurban team did not quantitatively state in their detailed plan how their BRT/HOT Lanes proposal would affect VRE service (Question 13). We hope that the forthcoming release of their transportation model will provide a more detailed response to the question that was posed.

We believe that the Fluor/Transurban proposal has many strong points and could benefit the I-95/395 corridor. However, we would like to see from them more detailed information on how their proposal could affect VRE, as well as improved coordination with existing transit agencies to better serve critical needs in the corridor.

I thank you for this opportunity to comment and look forward to working with you in the future.

Sincerely,

Signature on File at VDOT

Dale Zehner
Chief Executive Officer

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CHIEF ENGINEER